

Crisis Hotline Counselor for Boystown and eventually became an Omaha Police Department School Liaison, and Gang Prevention and Intervention Specialist where he still works today. Today Beto also develops and implements outreach programs for at-risk youth as a Youth Counselor for the South Omaha Boys and Girls Club. Through all these efforts, Alberto Gonzales has touched and changed the lives of hundreds, if not thousands of youth in the Hispanic community.

Mr. Gonzales' outstanding accomplishments have earned him several prestigious awards including the Friedman Award for Excellence in Youth Mentoring, Nebraska Hispanic Man of the Year Award, Induction into the Omaha South High School Alumni Hall of Fame, and many others. Alberto has taught us all that how you start out in life is not as important as how you finish. He has taught us we can never give up on the youth in our community, no matter the darkness of their current situation or their past.

Alberto gives credit to God, his mother who always prayed for him, his mentor Sister Joyce, and many of the educators and professionals who encouraged him along the way. He believes that showing unconditional positive regard and spending quality time with at-risk children can make a positive difference. He may not save every kid he encounters, but he believes in a philosophy that says, "If you plant a seed now, someone else might water and grow it later."

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MERIDEN RECORD-JOURNAL

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Meriden Record-Journal on the 150th Anniversary of its inaugural publication. This paper has been a staple of the Meriden community for the past century and a half, and its leaders have played a crucial role in informing the town.

The Record-Journal traces its history to The Weekly Visitor newspaper first published in 1867. In 1892, E.E. Smith, along with Thomas Warnock, acquired the paper and began a family legacy of running the local publication for four generations. Smith's son, Wayne, succeeded his father as publisher, and following Wayne's death in 1966, his stepson Carter White served as publisher until his retirement in 1988. What's more, various members of the family worked as writers, editors, and managers for the paper, contributing to the paper's success.

Though the Record-Journal has a long history in Meriden, its leaders have not been afraid to innovate and develop new practices to modernize the publication. RJ Media Group, which now publishes the paper, has been a leader in online, social media, and multimedia news in Connecticut. In fact, Editor & Publisher trade magazine named the Record-Journal as one of the "10 Newspapers That Do It Right" in March 2016, recognizing the hard work of the publication's leadership to keep the paper relevant for today's readers.

Mr. Speaker, the Meriden Record-Journal has been an important community institution

for a century and a half, connecting and informing the town of Meriden. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor it, and all the leaders who have ensured its success here today.

HONORING CHERYL JENNINGS

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of longtime Bay Area anchor and reporter Cheryl Jennings on the occasion of her recognition by the International Association of Sufism with its Humanitarian Award on September 22, 2017. Ms. Jennings has dedicated her entire career to spreading humanity throughout the Bay Area and across the world, and it is fitting for her to receive this honor.

Born in Fort Benning, Georgia, to an Army family, Ms. Jennings lived in many places as a child around the U.S. and the world. This spurred in her a lifelong interest in travel and contributed to the development of her strong will, compassion, and strength. Ms. Jennings' successful career in broadcasting includes many achievements, including nine Emmy awards, seven "Gracie" awards from the Alliance of Women in Media, and many other honors and citations.

Her work at ABC 7/KGO has included frightening and memorable episodes. During the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, for example, she was the sole reporter in the studio, relaying critical information to a very scared public for hours. For this coverage, Ms. Jennings and her news team were awarded two of the highest broadcasting awards in the nation: the George Foster Peabody Award and the Radio-Television News Directors Association's Edward R. Murrow award.

In addition to her professional achievements, Ms. Jennings has volunteered her time to support numerous local charities and organizations over the years. For the past 15 years, she has been a stalwart supporter of Roots for Peace and has traveled around the world promoting landmine removal for countless families and communities. From Camp Okizu for children with cancer, to Performing Stars of Marin, to Marin Abused Women's Services, countless individuals and communities have been touched by her generosity and heart.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing deep appreciation for Cheryl Jennings' humanitarian contributions, and in sending her best wishes for many more years of exceptional service.

HONORING HALIFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Halifax Community College located in my congressional district in Halifax County, North Carolina in the Town of Weldon as the

institution celebrates its 50th Founders' Day and installs its new president, Dr. Michael Elam. Since its inception 50 years ago, Halifax Community College has served as a cornerstone of the Roanoke Valley region and has been a source of pride for the community.

What would eventually become Halifax Community College was first called Halifax County Technical Institute and was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly on September 7, 1967. Originally located on US Highway 301 in Halifax, the school, led by its first president Dr. Phillip W. Taylor, first opened its doors to students in February 1968. The school remained in its original location until 1977 when it relocated to its present location on NC Highway 158 in the Town of Weldon.

Mr. Speaker, since its humble beginnings half a century ago, Halifax Community College has become known statewide for its innovative facilities and educational excellence in the Roanoke Valley. The institution serves more than 7,000 students each year and offers more than 40 academic programs that lead to certificates, diplomas and associate degrees. Halifax Community College offers basic literacy skills, workforce and human resources development, and continuing education programs. It is also home to the renowned 1,500-seat multipurpose theater called The Centre.

The staff of Halifax Community College work in earnest each day to achieve the school's mission "to meet the diverse needs of [the] community by providing high-quality, accessible and affordable education and services for a rapidly changing and globally competitive marketplace."

In recognition of its hard work and achievements, Halifax Community College has been the recipient of many prestigious awards including the 2015 Southern Region Equity Award by the Association of Community College Trustees; 2016 Advancing Diversity Award by the American Association of Community Colleges; 2016 Rural Community College Alliance Innovator Award; and 2017 American Association of Community Colleges Community College Safety, Planning, and Leadership Award.

Mr. Speaker, Halifax Community College is a vibrant, student-oriented institution that continues to embrace student learning and success as its top priorities. Under the visionary leadership of past presidents Dr. Phillip W. Taylor (1967–1988), Dr. Elton L. Newbern Jr. (1988–1998), Dr. Theodore H. Gasper Jr. (1998–2006), and Dr. Ervin V. Griffin Sr. (2006–2017), Halifax Community College has prospered and has transformed educational opportunities and outcomes for the Roanoke Valley.

I have no doubt that Halifax Community College's new president, Dr. Michael Elam, will build on the work of those who came before him and will ably and skillfully lead the institution into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the staff and students of Halifax Community College, past and present, as they celebrate 50 years of excellence in education. On behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the people of the First Congressional District of North Carolina, I wish Halifax Community College great success for the next 50 years and beyond.

RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICERS AND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WITH 25 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HOUSE AND RECIPIENTS OF THE HOUSE EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARD AND THE OFFICERS' AND INSPECTORS GENERAL'S TEAM PLAYER AWARD

HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, today, Ranking Member ROBERT BRADY and I wish to recognize the exceptional employees of the Officers (Clerk of the House, Sergeant at Arms, and Chief Administrative Officer) and the Inspector General of the U.S. House of Representatives, and congratulate those who have reached the milestone of 25 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as the recipients of the House Employee Excellence Award and the Officers' and Inspector General's Team Player Award.

The House's most important asset is its remarkable and steadfast employees, whose work is essential to keeping the operations and services of the House running efficiently and effectively. The employees we acknowledge today are commended for their hard work, dedication, professionalism, and teamwork; support of House Members, their staffs, and their constituents, and for their contributions day-in and day-out to the overall operations of the House. These employees, whose work is often performed behind the scenes, possess a wide range of responsibilities and skills that support the legislative process, ensure the security of this great institution, maintain our technology and service infrastructure, and contribute to more efficient and productive House support operations. These dedicated employees have accomplished many great things in a diverse range of activities, and the House of Representatives, its Members, staff, and the American public are better served because of them.

We recognize and honor the individuals named below for 25 years of loyal service to the House. Collectively, the employees listed below have provided 350 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Lisa Alvey, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Kevin Brennan, Office of the Sergeant at Arms;

William Crudup III, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Sharon Ellis-Gregg, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

John Hodges, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Derek Johann, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

William Michalek, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Louis Miller Jr., Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Michael Modica, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Christopher Naughton, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Todd Redlin, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Ronald Simmons, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;

Tammy Taft, Office of the Clerk;

Louis Williams Jr., Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

We also recognize and congratulate the House employees receiving the House Employee Excellence Award. This award is merit based; given to one employee from each House Officer organization, and the Office of Inspector General. Selected employees exhibited outstanding overall job performance and displayed a willingness to go above and beyond the requirements of their job for their organization throughout the last year. We honor the individuals named below for receiving this prestigious award.

Steven Johnson, Office of Inspector General;

Diana Rodriguez, Office of the Sergeant at Arms;

Robert Rota Jr., Office of the Clerk;

Angelisa Sarnowski, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

And finally, we recognize and congratulate the House employees being presented the Team Player Award. This award recognizes the value the House Officers and the Inspector General place on working collaboratively across House organizations to strengthen and protect the U.S. House of Representatives. These awardees have demonstrated a collaborative attitude, commitment to achieving team objectives, respect and support of their teammates, and dedication to the betterment of House operations. We honor the individuals named below for receiving this distinguished award.

Kim Arenas, Office of the Sergeant at Arms;

Karen McKinstry, Office of the Clerk;

Joseph Picolla, Office of Inspector General;

Timothy Wright, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

On behalf of the entire House community, we offer our congratulations and once again acknowledge and thank these employees for their professionalism and commitment to the U.S. House of Representatives as a whole, and in particular to their respective House Officers, the Inspector General, and collaboratively across these organizations. Their long hours, hard work, diverse skills, and team spirit are invaluable, and their years of unwavering service, dedication, and commitment to the House set an example for their colleagues and other employees who will follow in their footsteps. We celebrate our honorees, and we are proud to stand before you and the nation on their behalf to recognize the importance of their public service.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BETTER LIFE IN RECOVERY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Better Life in Recovery, an organization located in Springfield, Missouri. Founded by David Stoecker, this organization is a wonderful example of community service and is an inspiration to many across the state of Missouri.

Better Life in Recovery has a mission that is twofold. Firstly, to foster dignity for those who

struggle with substance abuse and mental health issues through performing community service. Secondly, the organization seeks to generate more public awareness of the dangers of substance abuse, through the medium of educational presentations, media interviews and public safety announcements.

On September 16 of this year the organization will be hosting a fundraising race to benefit recovery programs. It will begin at Rutledge Wilson Farm in Springfield. The fact that the race is held in September is also very pertinent with regards to the Better Life in Recovery's mission as it is held during National Recovery Month. National Recovery Month runs through the month of September. The purpose of National Recovery Month is to raise awareness and understanding of the various mental and substance use disorders some of our fellow Americans suffer from. It is also a month to celebrate those who have recovered from their addictions.

Mr. Speaker, Better Life in Recovery is an inspirational organization that I am humbled to recognize today. I would like to extend my personal congratulations and admiration on their achievements and hard work over the years. On behalf of the 7th District of Missouri, I wish this great organization the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VAL BUTLER DEMINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, my return to Washington this week was delayed by the impacts of Hurricane Irma.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 485, NAY on Roll Call No. 486, and NAY on Roll Call No. 487.

INTRODUCTION TO ELECTORAL COLLEGE REFORM

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the resolution I am introducing today expresses the sense of Congress that it and the states should consider a constitutional amendment to reform the Electoral College and to establish a process for electing the President and Vice President by a national popular vote. The resolution also encourages the states to further their efforts to form an interstate compact to award their Electoral College votes to the national popular vote winner.

This Sunday, September 17 is Constitution Day, marks the 230th anniversary of the Philadelphia Convention's approval of the Constitution. We should rightly celebrate the day that the Framers endorsed the basic framework of our democratic system of government enshrined in our Nation's governing charter. Yet, we should also use this day as an opportunity to reflect on the fact that the Constitution still retains the Electoral College, a fundamentally